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Having read these sermons with such questions in mind, questions suggested and answered by the sermons themselves, one cannot fail to be inspired anew with the wealth and power of the motives and ideals with which it is the noble privilege of the pulpit to deal. So far from losing faith in the "preaching of the Word," one is impressed with a fresh sense of the dignity of the Christian message, and stimulated with a new desire to prove with solid reasons that the church has a message for the modern world. There are multitudes today, as ever, who are seeking eagerly the way to the unseen; some are sad; many are weary; most lose faith and courage now and then. Death invades all homes sooner or later; the depths of sorrow are plumbed by thousands every day. Thank God that there are those who can interpret even death in its noble function; men who have learned by deep experiences of their own that "in the gospel of Jesus, in the Kingdom of God, there is the apocalypse of a world other and higher than our world of shadows and of dust!"

Truly, if the American pulpit lacks power, the reason does not lie in the subject-matter with which the preacher deals, the values of the religion which he ought to interpret. This volume of sermons may well convince both the pulpit and the pew that there is a dynamic in the modern point of view in religion which is able not only to win the reason, but to stir the will to noble conquests.

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#### EARLY ZOROASTRIANISM<sup>1</sup>

In Moulton's recent interpretation of early Zoroastrianism the style is very opaque. The overlapping and confusion of order make it difficult to follow the arguments, which sway back and forth, like a swinging pendulum, and never come to rest. The book deals, however, with a very tangled skein of facts which do not allow of an easy methodical unraveling. Moulton propounds many new and valuable theories but does not suppress or distort evidence in order to make his own theories seem more plausible than they really are. He has utilized all the most recent material, including even the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (ed. 11) and the first five volumes of Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*. He has done a great service in impartially sifting all the evidence and analyzing all the possibilities. More facts and time alone

<sup>1</sup> *Early Zoroastrianism*. The Hibbert Lectures for 1912, second series. By James Hope Moulton. London: Williams & Norgate, 1913. xx+468 pages. 10s. 6d.

can show how many of the new and plausible theories are correct. The book should stimulate discussion and will afford many clues for more detailed investigation.

Moulton argues for the early date of the Gāthās and for the historicity of Zoroaster whom, with Meyer and Geldner, he would place several generations earlier than the generally accepted date 660–583 B.C.; pronounces Darius to have been the first true Zoroastrian among the Achaemenian kings; emphasizes the fact, brought out by an inscription of Hommel, that Ahura Mazdāh is not a mark of Zoroaster's teaching, since it was hereditary in a small aristocratic caste before his time; discusses the popular religion of Persia before the time of Zoroaster; places the scene of the prophet's life and activity in Bactria; and tries to prove that the more esoteric teachings of Zoroaster, such as the doctrine of the Amshaspands, remained for centuries within the land of their birth which was far away from the main stream of history, and that they spread westward when they were adopted by the Magi and in the form they gave them; argues, against the unanimous Greek tradition that Zoroaster was a Magus, that the Magi "slaves" (cf. pp. 186 and 429) were an indigenous tribe of non-Aryan priests. The ritualistic elements in Zoroastrianism which are due to the Magi and represent survivals of primitive magic are examined; the alleged influences of Babylon on Zoroastrianism are discussed and shown to be without any real foundations; a Median story-book, full of Magian ideas, is traced behind the Book of Tobit.

The juxtaposition of the Greek evidence about Zoroaster with the linguistic and metrical evidence from the Rig Veda leads us into an *impasse* from which at present there is no satisfactory escape; the theory that a despised class of slaves, against whose animistic and magical religion Zoroaster fulminated, could so soon have secured paramount authority in Persia needs much more evidence to support it; the arguments against the theory of Babylonian influence on Zoroastrianism are not conclusive. Moulton has rendered a great service in pointing out weak points in present theories and in endeavoring to set up other tentative theories which are also consonant with many of the facts. Many more definite points must be located before the curve of development can be plotted with any accuracy.

The Boghaz-keui material is used with caution, but even more caution is necessary. Moulton seems to believe in "a prehistoric migration out of India backwards to the north-west" (cf. pp. 7 and 25–26), and goes much farther than Jacobi (*JRAS*, 1909, p. 726) who argues

that a tribe in eastern Iran, which had been influenced by Vedic culture, migrated westward. Moulton makes no reference to the recent discoveries in Turkestan and their bearing on theories of Indo-European migration.

Tentatively Moulton would connect the Tishtrya myth with India and find in it a reference to the breaking of the monsoon around Delhi. The only reasons adduced are very uncertain astronomical ones. He accepts the connection of the name Gaotema in the Yashts with the name Gotama Buddha and rejects Oldenberg's connection of Varuna and the Adityas with Babylon.

A map would have made the arguments much more intelligible.

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## BRIEF MENTION

### OLD TESTAMENT AND SEMITICS

CHIERA, EDWARD. *Legal and Administrative Documents from Nippur, Chiefly from the Dynasties of Isin and Larsa*. Philadelphia: University Museum, 1914. 110 pages+LI autographed plates and X photographic plates. \$5.00.

This book forms Vol. VIII, No. 1, of the "Publications of the Babylonian Section" of the University Museum, Philadelphia. It is an enlargement of Dr. Chiera's dissertation that formed a part of the work for his doctorate. It marks, therefore, the advent of another fellow-worker into the field of Assyriology—a worker who, judging by the first fruits of his work, will have no need to be ashamed. The autographed plates present 102 new texts, 12 of which are also reproduced photographically. An introduction discusses the "Place and Origin" of the texts, their "Characteristics," "The Seals," and the "Personal Names" and "Rim-Sin and the Fall of Isin." Specimen translations of nine different classes of documents are then given. These include purchases, leases, loans, donations, exchanges, protocols, and accounts. The date formulae are then discussed, a list of the date formulae for the dynasties of Isin and Larsa are given, as well as lists of proper names, and of the tablets in the volume. The work is on the whole well done. Dr. Chiera is a good copyist. His copies are clear and readable. If he has any fault it is that he shades too much. The work of the Introduction is also creditable, though, as Dr. Chiera himself recognizes, it is not final. The Yale Babylonian Collection has a new dynastic tablet covering this period, as well as many documents dated in the period of the Isin and Larsa dynasties. It is understood that Professor Clay and his pupils are preparing these for publication and that they will clear up many difficult problems in the chronology of this period. Nevertheless we heartily welcome Dr. Chiera's book.

G. A. B.